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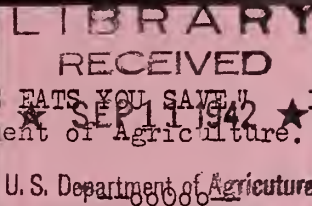
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Homemakers' chat

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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

Friday, September 11, 1942



SUBJECT: "MAKE GOOD USE OF THE FATS YOU SAVE" Information from home economists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Few foods are in the spotlight so much these days as fats - the plain, ordinary fats that collect all the while in the kitchen. Today here are suggestions about these fats from home economists, of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. These suggestions may give you ideas for getting the most from the fats you save.... using them to good advantage as food.

We all know how important it is these days to build up the country's total fat supply. By making good use of kitchen fats you help cut down the burden on commercial stocks of fats. Every bit of fat you save and use for food helps. The idea is to use all you can of what you save, and then turn in what's left to help increase the glycerine supply.

If you take the right care of the fats you save, you can use them in lots of ways in your regular cooking routine. They're good for seasoning, for frying, and in some cases for baking too. Of course, fats will become rancid if you don't use them within a reasonable length of time - and handle them carefully. The best thing to do is to plan, so you'll be sure to put the fat to work while it is still usable.

Let's see just exactly how these fats may be used. Take the drippings from roasts and other cooked meats. You can use some in gravies. They also make flavorful fats for seasoning - in vegetables, for instance. Try them in salad dressings, and on wilted lettuce. And see if you don't like their good flavor in spoonbread.

You can use drippings for baking also - if you clarify them first. Clarified drippings from fresh pork, for example, may be used just as you would use lard. In case you're not familiar with the term "clarify" as it applies to fats, it means to

wash out objectionable odors, tastes, or colors. We'll talk about how to clarify fats a little later on.

In most homes, a kind of drippings that collects quickly is bacon drippings. You probably are in the habit of using these drippings for shallow frying of many kinds - such as for frying eggs, apples, chicken, cabbage, and lean meats like liver. But you can also use bacon fat - as well as fat from sausage and poultry - in cream sauces for vegetables and in gravies.

Now for a different kind of fat - the kind you trim from raw meat. First, - you can use it just "as is" in puddings and pastries. For example, cut the fat in little slivers for making a crust for meat pie. As for suet, its use in puddings has given its name to a famous group. Every housewife knows suet pudding.

In addition to all this, you can also render the meat trimmings - melt them down, that is - and use them as you would use any other fat. Poultry fat is good for shortenings for almost any kind of baking. Its flavor makes it desirable. Rendered suet and rendered fresh pork make good shortenings too. You can use them for pastry, for biscuits, and other quickbreads.

Now that we've talked over the ways we can use these different fats, let's take a minute or two to talk about the things we do to the fats themselves....the things that make them most fit for these uses.

I've mentioned that some fats have to be rendered. Well, to render any raw fat such as suet, and fats from poultry, pork, and lamb, you heat it until it melts - becomes liquid. This separates the fat from the connective tissue. Poultry fat is naturally soft, so you don't have to cut it before rendering. But other fats melt quicker if you either grind or cut them into small pieces first.

You can render a small amount of fat in a double boiler over hot water. Cover it, and stir once in awhile. As soon as the fat is melted, strain it into a container that has a tight cover. When the fat is cold, store it.

Drippings have a characteristic flavor so you use them where you want that flavor. If you want to use them just as fat, clarify them....that means mixing with water, using twice as much water as fat, and boiling for 10 minutes. Stir the mixture well, and then leave it to cool. In the case of a soft fat, finish cooling it in the refrigerator. The fat should form a solid cake.

Lift off this layer or cake and scrape off any dark material from the under side. Then store the fat. You can remelt it and pour into a satisfactory container. Remember - clarified fats don't keep as well as other fats, so use them quickly.

Fat you use for deep frying needs special care. The particles of food that tend to collect in it make it spoil quicker - so strain the fat through double cheesecloth after each using. This takes out the food particles. If you handle it in the right way and keep it in a cold place, you can use this fat several times for deep frying.

To keep fats in good condition, you have to store them well. Put them in clean containers with tight fitting covers and store in a cool, dark place. Check up once in awhile to make sure they're not rancid....and be sure not to pour new fats in with those that are rancid.

Well, that's all on fats this time. Just remember to get all the good you can from the fats you save. This is not the time to let any valuable food go to waste. Every bit of fat you save and use helps build up the country's total fat supply.

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